

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 5 1. A method of processing service requests from a client to a server system through a network, said method comprising the steps of:
- 10 forwarding a service request from the client to the server system; and
appending a session identifier to the request and subsequent service requests from the client to the server system within a session of requests.
2. The method of Claim 1 wherein communications between the client and server system are according to hypertext transfer protocol.
3. A method of processing service requests from a client to a server system through a network, said method comprising the steps of:
- 20 forwarding a service request from the client to the server system;
returning a session identifier from the server system to the client; and
appending the session identifier to the request and to subsequent service requests from the client to the server system within a session of requests.
- 25 4. The method of Claim 3 wherein communications between the client and server system are according to hypertext transfer protocol.
5. A method as claimed in Claim 3 wherein the session identifier includes a user identifier.

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6. A method as claimed in Claim 3 wherein the session identifier includes an expiration time for the session.
- 5 7. A method as claimed in Claim 3 wherein the server system records information from the session identifier in a transaction log in the server system.
8. A method as claimed in Claim 7 wherein the server system tracks the access history of sequences of service requests within a session of requests.
- 10 9. A method as claimed in Claim 8 wherein the server system tracks the access history to determine service requests leading to a purchase made within the session of requests.
- 15 10. A method as claimed in Claim 7 wherein the server system counts requests to particular services exclusive of repeated requests from a common client.
11. A method as claimed in Claim 7 wherein the server system maintains a data base relating customer information to access patterns.
- 20 12. A method as claimed in Claim 11 wherein the information includes customer demographics.
13. A method as claimed in Claim 3 wherein the server system assigns the session identifier to an initial service request to the server system.
- 25 14. A method as claimed in Claim 3 wherein the server system subjects the client to an authorization routine

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15. A method as claimed in Claim 3 wherein the server system comprises plural servers including an authentication server which provides session identifiers for service requests to multiple servers.

a client directs a service request to a first server which is to provide the requested service;

the first server checks the service request for a session identifier and only services a service request having a valid session identifier, and where the service request has no valid identifier:

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    the first server redirects the service
request from the client to the authorization server;

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the authorization server subjects the client to the authorization routine and issues the session identifier to be appended to the service request to the first server;

the client forwards the service request appended with the session identifier to the first server; and

the first server recognizes the session identifier and services the service request to the client; and

17. A method as claimed in Claim 16 wherein the session identifier includes a user identifier.

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18. A method as claimed in Claim 16 wherein the session identifier includes an expiration time for the session.
19. A method as claimed in Claim 16 wherein the session identifier provides access to a protected domain to which the session has access authorization.
20. A method as claimed in Claim 19 wherein the session identifier is modified for access to a different protected domain.
21. A method as claimed in Claim 16 wherein the session identifier provides a key identifier for key management.
22. A method as claimed in Claim 16 wherein the server system records information from the session identifier in a transaction log in the server system.
23. The method of Claim 3 wherein the access rights of the client are fully contained within the session identifier.
24. A method as claimed in Claim 1 wherein a service request is for a document and the session identifier includes a user identification, further comprising:
returning the requested document wherein the document is customized for a particular user based on the user identification of the session identifier.
25. A method as claimed in Claim 1 wherein a service request is for a document which has been purchased by

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a user, the session identifier comprises an authorization identifier, and further comprising:

returning the requested document if the authorization identifier indicates that the user is authorized to access the document.

26. A method as claimed in Claim 1 wherein a service request is for a document wherein the session identifier comprises a user identifier, and further comprising:

returning the requested document to the client; and

charging the user identified in the identifier for access to the document.

27. A method of processing service requests from a client to a server system through a network, said method comprising the steps of:

appending a session identifier to the request; and

responding to requests for documents received from the client through the network by returning the requested documents wherein the documents are customized for a particular user based on a user profile.

28. A method of processing service requests from a client to a server system through a network, said method comprising the steps of:

responding to a request for a document received from the client through the network;

appending a session identifier, which includes a user identification, to the request; and

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returning the requested document wherein the document is customized for a particular user based on the user identification of the session identifier.

29. A method of processing service requests from a client to a server system through a network, said method comprising the steps of:

5 appending a session identifier to the request;
 responding to requests for information received
10 from the client through the network by returning the
 requested information to the client; and
 counting requests to particular information
 exclusive of repeated requests from a common client.

30. A method as claimed in Claim 29 comprising excluding
15 from the counting requests made for information from
 the client within a defined period of time.

- Sub 31. A method of processing service requests for a document
Att received from a client through a network in which the
C4 document has been purchased by a user, said method
20 comprising the steps of:

 responding to a request for a document received
 from a client through the network in which the
 document has been purchased by the user;

 appending an authorization identifier to the
25 request; and

 returning the requested document if the
 authorization identifier indicates that the user is
 authorized to access the document.

32. A method as claimed in Claim 31, wherein the
30 authorization identifier is encoded within a session
 identifier which is appended to the request.

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33. A method of processing service requests from a client to a server system through a network, said method comprising the steps of:

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responding to a request for a document received from a client through the network;
appending a session identifier to the request;
returning the requested document to the client, and;

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charging the user identified in the session identifier for access to the document.

34. A method as claimed in Claim 33, wherein a user identifier is encoded within a session identifier which is appended to the request.

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35. An information system on a network, comprising:
means for receiving service requests from clients and for determining whether a service request includes a session identifier;

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means for providing the session identifier in response to an initial service request in a session of requests; and

means for servicing service requests from a client which include the session identifier, the subsequent service request being processed in the session.

- 25 36. The information system of Claim 35 wherein access rights of the client are fully contained within the session identifier.

- 30 37. An information system as claimed in Claim 35 wherein the means for providing the session identifier is in a server system which services the requests.

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38. An information system as claimed in Claim 35 further comprising an authorization routine for authorizing the client prior to issuing the session identifier and means for protecting the session identifier from
5 forgery.
39. An information server system as claimed in Claim 35 further comprising a transaction log for recording information from the session identifier.
40. An information system as claimed in Claim 35 further comprising means for tracking access history of
10 sequences of service requests within the session of requests.
41. An information system as claimed in Claim 35 further comprising means for counting requests to particular
15 services exclusive of repeated requests from a common client.
42. An information system as claimed in Claim 35 further comprising a data base relating customer information to access patterns.
- 20 43. An information system as claimed in Claim 42 wherein the information includes customer demographics.
44. The system of Claim 35 wherein communications to and from the client are according to hypertext transfer protocol.

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45. An information server on a network, comprising:
means for responding to requests for service
received from a client through a network by returning
the requested service to the client; and
5 means for counting requests to particular service
exclusive of repeated requests from a common client.
46. A server as claimed in Claim 45 wherein the requests
include a common session identifier and the server
tracks requests within a session of requests.
- 10 47. A server as claimed in Claim 45 further comprising
means for excluding requests made to a service from
the client within a defined period of time.
48. A server as claimed in Claim 45 wherein communications
to and from the client are according to hypertext
15 transfer protocol.

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